Translation in Language Teaching (TILT):

Implementing translation techniques as effective communicative tools in the language learning/teaching environment

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Abstract

Translation in language teaching (TILT) has long been underestimated, or even disregarded, as a valuable communicative tool for L2 learners, despite the fact that it has never disappeared as a learning tool and is actually a common skill used in real life to enable different parties to communicate effectively with each other. As a counterargument to these conventional views, this paper will first discuss how effective and helpful translation can be in L2 teaching and learning in terms of developing skills for communication in L2 learners from the viewpoints of translation for communication and translation as a communication strategy. Thereafter, following examination of the significance of L1 use, TILT is investigated including past arguments for and against TILT, as well as actual L2 learners' perceptions toward translation. Finally, two TILT activity examples are introduced to provide ideas for utilizing translation in the classroom, with the conclusion that translation should certainly be considered more closely as a method or technique in teaching and learning L2.

Keywords: TILT (Translation in Language Teaching), translation, communication strategy, communication, L1 use

1. Introduction

Translation was frequently "rejected" and "outlawed" in L2 teaching for quite some time mainly due to the belief in monolingual teaching in L2 (G. Cook, 2010). However, since scholars, including Widdowson (1978), who is well known as an authority in communicative language teaching, admitted how reasonable and rational it would be to take greater advantage of translation, arguments advocating for its use have grown among a good number of researchers and practitioners around the globe. Guy Cook, an authority in TILT (Translation in Language Teaching), states in his 2010 book of the same title that:

> Translation has an important role to play in language learning – that it develops both language awareness and use, that it is pedagogically effective and educationally desirable, and that it answers student needs in the contemporary globalized and multicultural world. (p. 155)

Despite this recent trend, nevertheless, translation is often still used in language teaching with a sense of guilt (Kerr, 2014), and is still unintentionally, intentionally, or even forcedly ignored or rejected as a valuable tool for communication to be used by L2 learners. Learning another language is hard, and it takes the majority of people a significant amount of time and effort to acquire a new language to a satisfactory level. To make matters worse, levels of achievement are often difficult to measure, because the definition of "achievement" is very ambiguous and the target achievement level generally varies for each learner depending on their purpose for learning. Therefore, researchers and teachers have continued to struggle to find effective methods, and this frustration is probably one of the major reasons behind the criticism of conventional teaching methods that use translation, as well as L1, even with no particular reason or evidence to support such a position.

Although translation has not often been discussed in the area of L2 teaching/learning, the use of translation has never been completely discarded because both language teachers and learners, the actual players in L2 learning, naturally know that it is an inevitable component for use when learning a language (Hentschel, 2009). Hentschel insists that "if this process (translation) takes place anyway, whether we want it to happen or not, whether we consider it as useless or not, it would obviously be best to make use of it instead of trying to quell it" (2009, pp. 23–24). The important point here is "to make use of translation." It has been claimed that translation has been overused, and may also have been an impediment to the improvement of communicative L2 skills for L2 learners, both linguistically and psychologically. However, arguments should be turned to how translation should be used to help L2 learners acquire L2, not simply whether translation should be used or not.

In this paper, with the aim of pointing out how translation can be a valuable tool in improving L2 learners' communication skills, firstly, translation will be defined from the viewpoint of communication, in comparison with the type of translation that has been criticized in language teaching, followed by a discussion on communication strategies and translation studies. Secondly, as a premise of the argument on TILT, the value of L1 use in language teaching/learning will be examined, as translation cannot be discussed without taking L1 into consideration. Thereafter, TILT will be investigated with reference to past arguments for and against TILT, as well as actual L2 learners' perceptions toward translation based on previous studies. Finally, actual activities conducted by the author with university students in Japan will be presented in order to provide ideas for the potential and effective use of translation in terms of developing the communicative competence of L2 learners.

2. Translation for communication

2.1. Two types of translation

When it comes to translation, the fact that there are different kinds of translation is often neglected. When people do not want to accept translation as a legitimate L2 learning method, they usually point to the grammar translation method (GTM), which has been considered as a "villain" by those who have consistently devalued translation (G. Cook, 2010). To avoid misconceptions about it, it is important to recognize that there are roughly two kinds of translation, and the purpose for each is very different. In this paper, the term "literal translation" for one type of translation and simply italicized "*translation*" for the other are used from this point forward.

Literal translation, or word-for-word translation, is usually used in the GTM, and the main purpose of its use in teaching L2 is to promote understanding of vocabulary and grammar, so the resulting translation contains more or less the same grammar elements found in the source text (ST), such as structure and parts of speech. Nida labeled this type as the translation with formal equivalence (1964). Linguistic aspects in the ST are mainly considered when literal translation is conducted.

The fundamental purpose of the other type, "*translation*," is communication, because all the parts of the target text (TT) are chosen (and often adjusted) to make it understandable for the receiver when he/she receives the message of the utterance intended to be conveyed in communication. This type of translation has acquired a variety of names, including sense-for-sense translation, communicative translation (Newmark, 1988b), and translation with dynamic equivalence by Nida (1964). In this type of translation, the source text (ST) is examined as a whole focusing on context, not word for word, and translated into the TT with consideration given to linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic elements. (Examples of a literal translation and a *translation* of a movie subtitle are presented in Figure 1 below.) This is the type of translation that should be acknowledged and used as a valuable tool when teaching/learning L2 to help learners improve their L2 competence in communication.

So far, *translation* for communication has been defined as above, and it is the *translation* technique applied by professional interpreters and translators who act as mediators between two parties who do not share the same language. However, is this type of translation only used by professionals, and new to L2 learners?

<Example>

Source Text[1] (From the movie "The Hunger Games")

- It's a mockingjay pin to protect you. As long as you have it, nothing bad will happen to you, okay? I promise.

Target Text

[Literal translation[2]]

- これは、あなたを守るマネシカケスのブローチです。あなたがこれを持っている限り、悪いことは何もあなたに起こらないでしょう。いいですか？私は約束します。

[*Translation*[3] (in the actual subtitle in the movie)]

- お守りのマネシカケスよ。これを持ってれば選ばれない。約束する。

  (Literal translation: Protector mockingjay. If have this, won't be chosen. Promise.)

  *Being chosen to fight in the Hunger Games means something bad (death).

*When the line[1] was translated, following the subtitle translation rule restricting the number of characters per line, only the core meaning of it[1] was expressed. To reach this goal, it was impossible to translate literally[2] as it was too long (74 characters) and therefore the translator had to employ several *translation* techniques, resulting in a target text length of 30 characters. The techniques were applied with consideration given to linguistic (e.g. verb to noun, omitting subject), sociolinguistic (e.g. The word "お守り/protector" is a good-luck charm with origins in Shintoism in Japan), and pragmatic elements (e.g. "nothing bad will happen" to "you won't be chosen to fight in a lethal game").

Figure 1. An example of literal translation and translation for a movie subtitle

2.2. *Translation* as a communication strategy

Actually, all language users are very familiar with *translation* when communicating with others in their L1, and this technique is commonly known as "paraphrasing." Jakobson (1959) defined *translation* as "interlingual *translation*" and paraphrasing as "intralingual *translation*." In other words, both are *translation* and the difference between the two is whether they are used bilingually or monolingually. Callison-Burch defines these two as follows:

> Whereas *translation* represents the preservation of meaning when an idea is rendered in the words in a different language, paraphrasing represents the preservation of meaning when an idea is expressed using different words in the same language. (2007. p. iii)

As L2 learners are used to paraphrasing in L1, they should undergo the process of *translation* naturally, since the production process is almost identical, with just the outcome

being in a different language. Furthermore, they are both used for the primary purpose of enabling or facilitating communication. That said, there is actually one more difference, which is the resource of knowledge required during the process of *translation* and paraphrasing. When people paraphrase within their L1, they can choose components for TT from an abundance of resources in their own language. On the contrary, when translating from L1 to L2, they do not have that kind of freedom because of their limitations in the foreign language. This means that they are required to go through a *translation* process with dynamic equivalence; and the lower the proficiency level they are at, the more dynamic equivalence they need to implement. This is an important skill for L2 learners to acquire in order to avoid breakdowns in communication.

The type of strategic competence used to compensate for breakdowns in communication employs communication strategies (CSs) (Canale and Swain, 1980), and its effectiveness from the viewpoint of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has been discussed by many researchers over the past three decades (e.g. Tarone, 1981; Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991; Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Omar, Embi & Yunus, 2012), with Dörnyei (1995) stating that learners might benefit if they are directly taught CSs in developing their coping skills during communication instead of being taught communication skills solely focusing on linguistic abilities. In addition, Omar, Embi & Yunus (2012) suggested that teaching CSs would help learners compensate for their insufficient language command and promote a creative use of their L2 knowledge.

CSs are broadly categorized in two groups: positive and negative CSs. While speakers use negative CSs to give up conveying the partial or entire content of a message of his/her intention in order to avoid disruption of communication, positive CSs, or "achievement " or "resource expansion" strategies (Corder, 1981; Faerch and Kasper, 1983; Ellis, 1985), are employed to overcome communication problems utilizing already-possessed knowledge or skills. Paraphrasing is positioned as one of these positive CSs (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991), and this means *translation* can be considered as a CS, because paraphrasing and *translation* go through the same process in terms of the purpose of keeping communication alive.

This kind of CS requires a significant amount of mental (and usually linguistic) effort, as a speaker needs to explore his/her long-term memory to retrieve knowledge relevant to the content of interaction in question. Tanaka (2006) mentions that when a speaker is aware that there are more appropriate words or expressions to choose from but is unable to use them because he/she has forgotten or cannot recall them, he/she uses this type of strategy in order to fill the gap in communication. Therefore, the speaker would make an effort to choose

words or expressions that could be as close as possible to those he/she is trying to achieve, with consideration given to the context and also the comprehension level of the other party.

Canale and Swain (1980) explain that CSs are closely related to the other two components of communicative competence: grammatical and sociolinguistic, which means that it is necessary to have the ability to choose linguistic components, while paying attention to the context of the communication when using CSs. As one of the positive, or effort-requiring, CSs, paraphrasing is a complicated yet indispensible skill for any language user to play an active role in communication. *Translation*, the counterpart of paraphrasing, demands more mental effort than that needed in L1 monolingual communication because they have to undergo a linguistic selection process via a more complicated retrieval system from their resources of the two languages. Therefore, explicit instruction on how to utilize *translation* would be desirable, rather than relying on learners' instinct for implicit learning.

The following section explains how *translation* works for the purpose of communication, based on previous studies in the area of translation.

2.3. Translation studies

According to Halliday (1992, p. 15), *translation* is "the total process and relationship of equivalence between two languages." In other words, the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) are equivalent, not equal. Nida (1964, p. 156) stated in his seminal book *Toward a Science of Translating* that "since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages." More than half a century later, Bellos (2011, p. 5) proposed a similar view in his book, saying, "Any utterance of more than trivial length has no one *translation*. All utterances have innumerably many acceptable *translations*." This means the decision on how much equivalence aimed for is very much up to the individual translator, as "equivalent" is a very vague definition.

In the same book, Nida (1964) broadly categorized translation equivalence as being of two kinds: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. Shakernia (2013) explains that formal equivalence attempts to preserve words and forms as close to the ST as possible to avoid corrupting those in the original message, so this can be seen as a more of a word-for-word, or literal translation. On the other hand, dynamic equivalence is concerned with the more thought-for-thought *translation*. With this kind of equivalence, translators have more freedom to negotiate without having to stick rigidly to forms, such as grammar and dictionary

definitions, as long as the main message of the ST is preserved. It is especially useful, and even necessary, when the source language is far in language distance from the target language, making a more literal translation difficult to produce. Dynamic equivalence is also called functional equivalence.

In terms of the function-focused, Halliday's SFL (systemic functional linguistics) or SFG (systemic functional grammar) shares the same approach as that of dynamic equivalence. He describes language as a semiotic system, "not in the sense of a system of signs, but a systemic resource of meaning" (Halliday, 2006, p. 192). His view on translation clarifies the nature of dynamic equivalence:

> Sometimes we do not have to go beyond the immediate grammatical environment – the local context of working – to interpret the concept of equivalence, given a functional grammar with which to do it. But at other times, we have to go beyond the grammar, up into the discourse semantics and then outside the text altogether, to engage with the context of situation and ultimately with the context of culture. (Halliday, 1992, p. 25)

In the same study, he also states that "*translation* is a meaning-making activity" (p. 15) and "we become interested in the formal patterns only once we can assume that the semantic relations are in place" (p. 16). This "meaning over form" approach is categorized as a "communicative and functional group" by Baker and Malmkjær (1998). They argue that this type of translation can "broadly represent a view which refuses to divorce the act of translating from its context, insisting upon the real-world situation factors which are prime determinants of meaning and interpretation of meaning" (p. 29).

Vermeer's Skopos Theory can also be included as an idea that highlights skopos as the key to a translator's decision to support the act of translating (Baker & Malmkjær, 1998). Vermeer (2000) defines skopos as "the goal or purpose" of a *translation*. This means that the first concern is the receiver of the TT, and it is essential to select linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic elements to form a message, which is comprehensible enough to the target receiver.

One way to explain what actually happens through this dynamic equivalence approach is to apply the term, "shift," which was defined by Catford (1965, p. 73) as "departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL (source language) to the TL (target language)." Munday (2008) also explained that "shifts are small linguistic changes occurring in *translation* of ST to TT" (p. 55), and "when the two concepts diverge, a

translation shift is deemed to have occurred" (p. 60). In the case of the *translation* of Figure 1 (subsection 2.1), shifts are seen in a variety of lexical aspects, such as parts of speech ("to protect"/verb → "protector"/noun) and word order ("nothing bad will happen to you" → "you won't be chosen."). A word in ST is even shifted into a word with a completely different meaning in TT ("happen" → "choose") as the translator has incorporated a context into a single word in order to communicate the message clearly and efficiently. Losses and gains, in addition to shifts, are other processes that typically take place during the dynamic equivalence *translation* process (Bassnett, 2002) as *translation* strategies in order to convey the meaning of ST more clearly, and to control the amount of information considering the receivers' comprehension of TT (Torikai, 2013).

A strong example of ultimate *translation* with very dynamic equivalence is subtitle translation for movies and videos between two languages. Since there are strict rules that govern the *translation* process in this case, translators frequently need to make dynamic decisions. For example, in Japan, professional subtitle translators (translating into Japanese) follow the "up to four characters per second" and "up to two lines with a maximum of 13 characters per line" rules commonly accepted in the industry (Torikai, 2013). While a significant amount of information in the ST generally needs to be dispensed with, owing to the difference between actors' speaking speed and viewers' reading speed, some elements need to be augmented due to certain cultural differences behind the two languages involved. This is the aforementioned "loss and gain" *translation* process explained by Bassnett (2002). Furthermore, translators have to pay attention to other aspects, such as images and sound that may appear, in addition to the spoken lines.

Some people complain that subtitle translators are not doing their job properly because many subtitles are completely different from the original lines spoken by the actors, but translators have to consider a great many aspects following theories, techniques, and rules, not only of translation studies, but also of many other academic and industrial fields.

There is an interesting example regarding subtitle translation, created by Natsuko Toda, a leading Japanese subtitle translator. She translated subtitles for the movie, *The Terminator* (Hurd & Cameron, 1984), in which the most famous line, perhaps, was "Hasta la vista, baby (see you later, baby.)." This was translated by Toda, as "*Jigoku-de ao-ze*, baby (see you in hell, baby)." This was her interpretation of the ST, and a very dynamic *translation* to convey the "implicated" message in this particular line. Subtitle translation is, in a way, an extreme case of *translation*, but it is a clear example of how "good" *translation* aims to convey the core message of the ST to the other parties.

Most L2 learners may not yet possess enough of the linguistic resources to express what they intend to say or write in L2; therefore, naturally, they need to translate their thoughts into L2 rather dynamically to expedite communication. As there are not many options to choose from, they need to go through a tactical thought process focusing on meaning, rather than form, to compensate for their lack of language resources. It does not have to be the kind of technical skills required by the subtitle translator, but dynamic decision-making skills and strategies can be helpful, or even essential.

As has been previously mentioned, *translation* is conducted with consideration given to linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic aspects. If learners learn how to use *translation*, they need to observe all of these aspects from both L1 and L2 points of view, which would be good practice in paying attention to the deeper elements inherent in both languages and to compare the similarities and differences between the two. This could be very important for them in becoming successful L2 users in a globalized society.

The following section focuses on the notion of TILT (translation in language teaching), introduced by G. Cook (2010) in his published book of the same title, which has seen translation gain more attention in the SL/FL education field.

3. Translation in language teaching (TILT)

3.1. L1 use in L2 teaching

Translation involves plural languages: a source language and target language(s), so when discussing the value of translation in language teaching, the significance of L1 needs to be acknowledged first. The issue of whether L1 should be used or not in the process of SL/FL acquisition has been a controversial issue among the academic, practitioner, and even non-expert demographic. Negative perceptions of L1 usage were not actually caused by hard evidence, but mainly by a non-definite belief influenced by certain claims from supporters of theories, such as the "natural approach" (Krashen & Terrel, 1983), which asserts that L2 learners should acquire L2 like young children who naturally learn their own language. Under such circumstances, the effective use of L1 has been largely ignored.

For the majority of L2 learners, "the ideal outcome of foreign language learning is high proficiency in the foreign language or a 'near native' competence" (Hentschel, 2009, p. 15), and most learners will picture themselves speaking the new language as if they were native speakers. Their goal may be to become like a native speaker, but it is generally a long, long road to travel to achieve this, and often almost impossible. If a learner sets his/her role model

as a native speaker, this person tends to aim at a direct process, from thinking in L2 to communicating in L2. However, their "role models should be those of successful L2 users, not native L1 users" (V. Cook, 2002b, p. 336), as this is a more realistic, practical, and "natural" approach for L2 learners. Generally, non-native speakers are continually developing as learners of the target language, even language teachers and experts, and their target is to likely become an L2 user who has a good command of both L1 and L2 as a bilingual in a globalized multilingual society, rather than to use L2 solely with L2 native speakers in a monolingual society.

The title of Grosjean's article, "The bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person" (Grosjean, 1989) highlights well that L2 users should not be seen as double monolinguals, but real bilinguals. In the L2 user's mind, the two languages coexist interwovenly through numerous aspects, such as vocabulary (Beauvillain & Grainger, 1987), syntax (V. Cook, 1994), phonology (Obler, 1982) and pragmatics (Locastro, 1987). Differentiating from monolingual users, Cook describes L2 users as having certain characteristics, such as,

- the L2 user uses language differently from monolinguals, like code-switching and translation;
- the L2 user's knowledge of the second language is typically not identical to that of a native speaker in syntax, vocabulary, etc.;
- the L2 user is often an intermediary between two cultures and two peoples;
- the L2 user's knowledge of their first language is in some respects not the same as that of a monolingual;
- L2 users have different minds from monolinguals; and
- L2 users have slightly different brain structures (V. Cook, 2002a, 2002b, n.d.).

These characteristics of L2 users should be indicative of a role model in SL/FL learning, but the L2-only approach has occupied this area for a long time, mainly due to the trend in use of the widely-accepted Direct Method during the 1970s and the Communicative Approach during the 1980s. According to G. Cook (2010), support for these monolingual teaching methods is based on four principles:

- monolingualism: the assumption that the language, including meta language, used by both teachers and learners of SL/FL must be predominantly L2, and movement backwards and forwards between languages is unimportant;

- naturalism: the assumption that learners are able to pick up L2 through immersion in a context, similar to the way that infants learn their mother tongue in their communicative environment;
- native-speakerism: the assumption that native speakers are the best language teachers as they are the best role models for language learners; and
- absolutism: the assumption that there is absolute confidence in monolingualism in SL/FL teaching and learning as learners prefer it to bilingual approaches, therefore making it the only true path to success in SLA/FLA.

These assumptions have been gradually shifting and changing though, and the effectiveness of the use of L1 in the area of SLA has been advocated and insisted on by many scholars, researchers, and practitioners, with support from contemporary experts in the field, one of whom notes "such respected names as Vigotsky, Halliday and Widdowson were already on record as advocates" (Kerr, 2014, p. 1).

Even so, it is not easy to convince those with a strongly-rooted notion and belief in L2 monolingualism, and this absolutism still exists in the minds of many researchers, teachers, and learners, as well as administrators today. In Japan, for example, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology suggests that English subject classes will and should be conducted in English (MEXT, 2013). Under this authoritative guidance, many teachers use L1 in the classroom with a sense of guilt, and this hesitant attitude not only hinders the potential for L1 use as a classroom resource (Kerr, 2014) but also results in the exclusion of L1 from language classrooms, portraying it as something that will interfere with L2 acquisition (V. Cook, 2001).

Despite the feeling of guilt, many teachers (who have knowledge of their students' L1), as well as learners, have actually never stopped using L1 in the classroom as they naturally know it is a useful, essential, and realistic resource for new language acquisition. It is an obvious fact that bilingual dictionaries have never disappeared, and have been regularly used by most learners of L2. Such situations in reality prove that using L1 is in fact more "natural" than learning a language naturally like young children do. Although teachers are pressured to use L2 in the classroom, it is not necessarily what the students themselves want. According to Cotsworth and Medlock (2013), they even value native speaker teachers' use of students' L1 for a better understanding of L2, and for forging a stronger relationship of trust between the teacher and the student.

However, this does not mean that L1 can be used wholesale and randomly. For example,

Atkinson (1987) warns of the dangers of excessive dependency on L1 in the classroom, and points out that it can lead to students becoming worried that they do not really understand the L2 until it has been translated, thereby limiting their opportunities to use L2 although they are quite capable of managing it. In addition, based on his teaching experience exploiting L1 on an experimental basis for various purposes, Atkinson introduces techniques and activities that he found useful. They include eliciting language, checking comprehension, giving instructions, and presentation and reinforcement of language. Likewise, there are many other scaffolding techniques using L1 that teachers can adopt, such as code-switching, sandwiching, and recasting (Kerr, 2014). All in all, as long as the teacher has a well-defined purpose and their objective is to improve students' SL/FL competence, L1 should be recognized as a useful resource for both teachers and students.

From a learner's point of view, it is indeed helpful for them to learn how to utilize L1 in their L2 learning, especially in terms of learner autonomy. As learners do not all learn the same way (Gardner, 1993; Levy, 2008), teachers should be aware that they cannot teach all students the same way. Some learners may be able to get the hang of manipulating L2 more easily, and some may need more handholding explicitly using L1. Therefore, teachers should leave some space for learners to explore how they can learn to be (or feel) somewhat independent outside the classroom. In support of this notion, it is better for learners to receive some advice and tips on how to make use of L1 in their SL/FL acquisition. One thing that should not be misunderstood here though is that the main purpose for most language learners is to be able to communicate as L2 users, not learn more about their own language. Considering this, L1 should simply be used more as a tool to help or even enrich L2 learning.

With all this taken into consideration, it is not practical to completely exclude L1 from L2 learning. As mentioned earlier, L2 learners are always L2 users, and their goal will generally be to become more advanced and productive L2 users, not to become an L2 native speaker. For example, they may very well find themselves giving instructions in L2 to help foreign tourists or residents in their own country based on the information in literature or on signs written in L1. They will likely conduct research in L2 by reading articles or watching Internet videos in order to give presentations or write reports in L1, or vice versa. They may very well act as a mediator, translating or interpreting to and from L1 and L2 to help those who cannot communicate with each other in their own languages. They will sometimes mix L1 and L2 when communicating with other L2 users, adjusting to meet the other party's language ability level. As long as we are living in this age of globalization, it is important not to ignore the significance of the role of L1 in interlingual/intercultural communication, as it is

not just about being something convenient or useful to use, but an essential and very necessary tool.

3.2. Translation in language teaching (TILT)

"Translation has led a peculiar existence over the past decades in Second Language Acquisition Studies and in Foreign Language Teaching/Learning Methodologies" (Witte, Harden, & Ramos de Oliveira Harden, 2009, p. 1). On one hand, it is rejected, avoided, or even banned, and, on the other hand, it is accepted, tolerated, or even appreciated. Carreres (2006, p. 1) goes even further, by enthusiastically stating, "Translation is back! But... was it ever gone?"

It is widely acknowledged that almost all L2 learners use bilingual dictionaries to look up the meaning of L2 words or to find the right L2 word or expression to communicate their understanding of something they know in their L1. This act of using bilingual dictionaries is actually one form of translation, as *translation* can be performed at different levels, not only through paragraphs or sentences, but also at the word and even morpheme level.

Numerous arguments concerning this have surfaced over the entire history of language teaching, and translation in language teaching, or TILT, is still a controversial issue, mainly due to beliefs developed along with the rise of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, which is based on the ideas of monolingual (L2) teaching methodologies. The main positions concerning TILT have been well documented by researchers on both sides of the argument, for example:

- TILT is associated with the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), which is considered "unnatural, authoritarian, and dull" (G. Cook, 2010), and it is frustrating and de-motivating for students (Carreres, 2006);
- translation is a mechanical transfer of meaning between two languages, so it is artificial and not communicative (Fernández-Guerra, 2014; Carreres, 2006; Conti, 2015);
- translation forces learners to view L2 through their L1, and causes negative interference due to learners' L1 resource in their previous knowledge (Pan & Pan, 2012; Fernández-Guerra, 2014);
- translation deprives learners of opportunities to receive and produce L2 (Fernández-Guerra, 2014), as "translation takes up lots of valuable time that could be devoted to more beneficial communicative activities" (Conti, 2015);
- translation is a purposeless exercise in TILT as it has no application in the real world

(Carreres, 2006), and it is something that professional translators and interpreters should learn, not L2 learners (Fernández-Guerra, 2014); and

- learners will not be able to get out of the habit of translation, resulting in being unable to comprehend and produce L2 with confidence (G. Cook, 2010).

These arguments were probably provided because of the apparent struggles and difficulties that surrounded many seeking language acquisition and, therefore, blame the traditional methods of learning that involved L1 use and translation. Despite these negative views toward TILT, an increasing number of recent studies over the last few decades have actually supported and promoted TILT, indicating the positive and effective aspects of translation for pedagogical purposes, such as,

- translation in TILT does not refer to the GTM (Schjoldager, 2004), and it refers to *translation*, which involves not only linguistic, but also cultural and extralinguistic factors for communicative purposes (Leonardi, 2011; Fernández-Guerra, 2014);
- *translation* is an unavoidable naturally-occurring cognitive activity for L2 learners, so they should be instructed how to do it correctly to help them become aware of the fact that there is no one-to-one correspondence between two languages and to minimize L1 interference (negative transfer) in L2 production (Leonardi, 2011);
- "bilinguals at whatever level experience interference of one kind or another, and practice in *translation* encourages awareness and control of interference" (Malmkjær, 1998, as cited in Leonardi, 2011, p. 17);
- *translation* resembles real world practice, especially in today's globalized world (Fernández-Guerra, 2014);
- L2 learners are expected to become L2 users who will mediate between two parties who do not share a mutual language they can both understand, using *translation* skills, and "being able to translate is a major component of bilingual communicative competence" (G. Cook, 2010, p. xx);
- *translation* is recognized by some scholars as the fifth skill, following reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Kaveliauskienė & Kaminskienė, 2007; Gaspar, 2009; Leonardi, 2011), as one of the skills essential to improve communicative competence in L2, focusing on the style, nuances and subtleties of L2 (Fernández-Guerra, 2014);
- the incorporation of *translation* in the CLT approach makes learners aware that it is not a boring and pointless exercise, but rather a helpful tool to use in real-life

communication (Pan & Pan, 2012);

- *translation* is a motivating activity (Mogahed, 2011), as if it is used in TILT properly, it works as a good learning tool that can invite discussion between students as both a problem-solving and cognitive exercise, while helping them contrast two languages, improve their language skills, and see the usefulness of *translation* (Liao, 2006; Fernández-Guerra, 2014); and
- *translation* can be viewed as a strategy to learn L2 when using L1 as a basis for understanding, remembering, and producing L2 (Liao, 2006).

In addition to such positive attitudes and viewpoints of researchers concerning the usefulness of TILT, there are also a number of studies conducted using surveys and questionnaires to investigate learners' perceptions and opinions on TILT.

There is a reality whereby many learners hold the belief that translation is undesirable, as they have been affected by the notion that depending on L1 is harmful (Liao, 2006). However, in general, many of them actually find it useful and helpful in their L2 learning. According to a questionnaire administered by Hsieh (2000, as cited in Liao, 2006. p.195), *translation*, from the learners' viewpoint, was beneficial in enhancing their reading comprehension, reading strategies, vocabulary learning, and cultural background knowledge.

Furthermore, a survey conducted by Fernández-Guerra (2014) indicated the positive attitude of L2 learners toward *translation*, and she listed several reasons for this:

> Translation is one of their preferred language learning tasks, it is motivating, it facilitates a deeper understanding of the form and content of the source language text, it increases learners' awareness of the differences between both linguistic systems, it allows them to reexpress their thoughts faster and easier, and it helps them acquire linguistic and cultural knowledge. (p. 153)

Another example can be seen in a study conducted by Liao (2006), who investigated the role of *translation* and learners' learning beliefs. In this, they expressed the inevitability of *translation*, but showed some contradictory feeling toward its use. They believed that they needed translation during their L2 learning process, but they were anxious at the thought of translation causing negative interference and inhibiting their thinking in English. Liao considers that this may well become a "bottleneck" in their advancement in L2 learning, and many learners feel *translation* as a learning strategy can actually help them improve their L2

skills and solve problems, especially in memory, compensation, cognitive, affective, and social aspects.

There are more surveys and studies related to learners' perception on *translation* used for language learning. The results of these show a variety of positive perceptions toward TILT by learners in general (Carreres, 2006; Kavaliauskienë & Kaminskienë, 2007; Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008; Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Ashouri & Fotovatnia, 2010, as cited in Fernández-Guerra, 2014, pp.157–158). At the same time, however, they indicated that learners also have some negative perceptions toward TILT, seemingly due to being affected by the widely recognized arguments that support monolingualism in CLT and other theories and methodologies of SLA.

With regard to how to use TILT, a variety of different techniques, methodologies, and practices have been presented by a growing number of researchers and practitioners (Witte, Harden, & Ramos (Eds.), 2009; G. Cook. 2010; Kerr, 2014). In terms of practicality, *translation* is likely to be more time-efficient and clearer than L2-only demonstration, explanation, or guided discovery approaches (Kerr, 2014). Therefore, both teachers and peer learners can use it for instructions, as well as scaffolding, because "*translation* is not only a product but also a process" (Leonardi, 2011, p. 21).

Nevertheless, *translation* as an activity or process may well be considered time-consuming because it involves a variety of thought processes, linguistically, pragmatically and communicatively. This may be perceived as complicated and difficult for learners, especially if the expected end result is to be a perfect product somewhat like the level of professional translators. It is probably not an ideal assignment for many teachers as well, because the outcome of translated products will most likely be different for each student. However, this challenging process is important for the development of L2 competence, as *translation* and related exercises could be beneficial to L2 learners "to improve verbal agility, to expand students' vocabulary in L2, to develop their style, to improve their understanding of how languages work, to consolidate L2 structures for active use," and "to monitor and improve the comprehension of L2" (Leonardi, 2011, pp. 21–22).

According to Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009), L1 can be seen as a great pedagogical resource, and using L1 can enhance learners' confidence and focus on both meaning and structure. Regardless of their proficiency level, the majority of learners continue mentally translating between L1 and L2, either consciously or subconsciously (Kaveliauskienė & Kaminskienė, 2007). Therefore, it can well be argued that "it is pointless to try to avoid their internal thinking in L1 and code-switching between L1 and L2, since it is regarded as

naturally developmental" (Fernández-Guerra, 2014, p. 156).

In the next subsection, two activities will be presented that were actually conducted by the author for Japanese EFL students majoring in English in a university in order to provide suggestions and examples on how to implement TILT in the classroom.

3.3. Example TILT activities in classroom

The following two activities were conducted in a university EFL classroom in Japan with 21 freshmen (18–19 years of age) at the low-intermediate level (CEFR A2-B1) majoring in English. The textbook used in this class was designed to develop four skills with a main focus on communication.

Activity 1

This activity was used as warm-up conversation practice with a partner, at the introduction stage of a unit on the topic of books/reading. These students had been assigned a word count reading target of 80,000 words during one semester under the Extensive Reading program initiated at the institution. They started Level 2 on the program and could raise their level once they passed a certain number of online tests.

First, the teacher asked the whole class to come up with five example questions in L1 (Japanese) to be used in the following conversation practice. L1 was chosen here because they usually struggled to make even simple sentences in L2 (English) and tended to limit themselves in generating a variety of ideas. The following are the actual five questions that were made by the students, accompanied in parentheses by the literal translations that correspond to the linguistic components particular to Japanese grammar (word order, omitting the subject, etc.).

1. *何ワードいった？* (*How many words reached?*)
2. *テスト受かった？* (*Test passed?*)
3. *レベル３いった？* (*Level* 3 *gone?*)
4. *面白いのどれ？* (*Which one interesting?*)
5. *最後まで頑張れる？* (*Up to the end, can make effort?*)

After making the five questions in L1, they were directed to translate them into L2 together in class. The teacher then wrote them down on the whiteboard located at the front, using scaffolding techniques, such as correcting mistakes, explaining the reason for the

mistakes, and suggesting *translation* ideas (See Figure 2). During the *translation* process, the teacher tried to suggest multiple examples to make the learners aware that there was not one answer (TT) only in each case and that it was important to focus on meaning over form. As shown in Figure 2, as a result of *translation* with dynamic equivalence, a variety of types of shift occurred. For example, the TTs of one ST had different tenses (Q2 and Q4), the subject of TT was different (Q4), and the words used in TT didn't have to include dictionary-translated words (Q1: *reach*ed → read; Q2: *pass* → fail; Q3: *Level* 3 → Level 2, etc.).

This kind of impromptu activity might be difficult for teachers who are not used to *translation*, but some questions are predictable and can be prepared in advance. It could also be interesting and motivating for learners when they see the teacher (as an L2 learner with more advanced proficiency) go through the creative thought process, and sometimes with a struggle. Furthermore, teachers can sometimes use a dictionary or the Internet to find solutions together with their learners, which could provide a good learning experience for them, by working on something with more knowledgeable others.

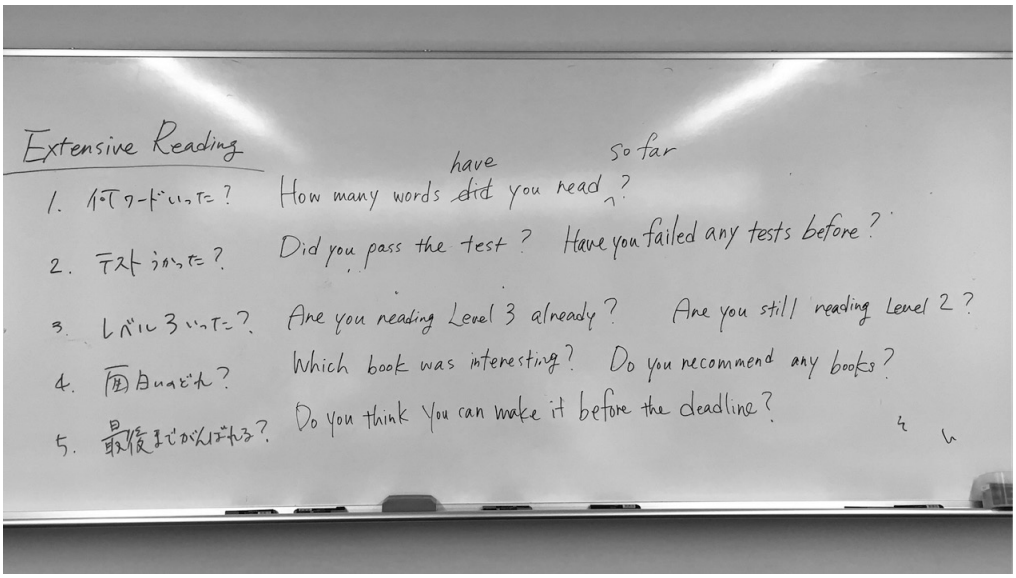


Figure 2. L1-L2 Translation for five questions to be used in a conversation practice

Activity 2

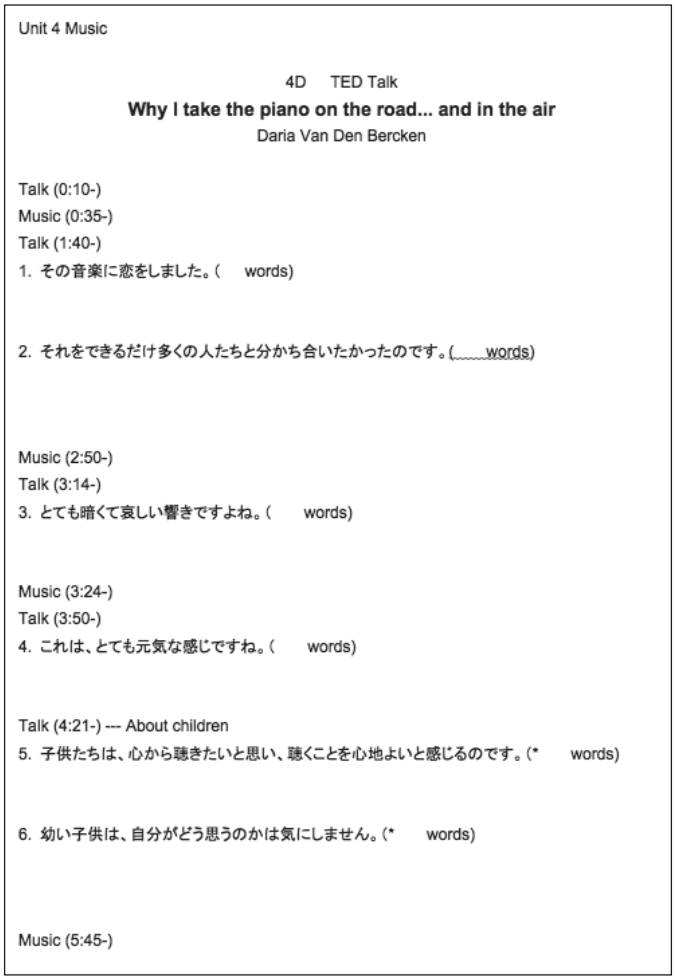
This activity was added to the listening comprehension section of a TED Talk presentation in a unit with the topic of music. TED Talk presentations are very difficult for learners at the low-intermediate level (CEFR A2-B1), especially as a listening exercise, and to

give comprehension questions to them is actually often beyond their capabilities. Therefore, a *translation* pair work exercise was implemented before the comprehension exercise in this lesson. Six key sentences in the presentation were selected in order to help the students get the gist of the content.

First, learners watched the whole TED Talk presentation with L1 subtitles to understand the context. Then, they were given a handout with six L1 sentences (The teacher had translated the original L2 utterances into L1.) to be translated into L2 with their partner (Figure 3). The following are the six sentences in L1, accompanied in parentheses by the actual utterances in the presentation. The underlined parts in the STs are translated literally into L2 and mentioned in parentheses as they were quite different from the original utterances.

1. *その音楽に恋をしました。* (I fell in love with the music.)
2. *それをできるだけ多くの人たちと分かち合いたかったのです。* (I wanted to share it with as many people as possible.)
3. *とても暗くて悲しい (dark and sad) 響き(sound: noun)ですよね。* (This sounds very melancholic, doesn't it?)
4. *これは，とても元気な (cheerful) 感じ (feel: noun) ですね。* (This sounds very energetic, doesn't it?)
5. *子供達は，心から (from the bottom of the heart) 聴きたいと思い，聴くことを (listening) 心地よいと感じるのです。* (Children are really willing to listen and comfortable doing so.)
6. *幼い子供は，自分がどう思うのかは (how they think about) 気にしません (do not care)。* (Young ones don't question their own opinion.)

During the pair work, learners were allowed to use informational resources, such as dictionaries and the Internet, and ask questions to the teacher and other learners. After the pair work *translation*, they listened to the presentation individually on their own smartphone, and searched for the original utterances. This was a dictation activity, and the number of words for each sentence was given by the teacher so this time the learners were expected to pick up every word to focus on form. At this point, however, it was very important to point out that they were not "answer" *translations*. As there were numerous possible *translations* for one ST, it was essential for the teacher to accept the different *translation* examples which the learners came up with. The role of the teacher in such a situation is to provide



Unit 4 Music

4D TED Talk

Why I take the piano on the road... and in the air

Daria Van Den Bercken

Talk (0:10-)
Music (0:35-)
Talk (1:40-)
1. その音楽に恋をしました。(words)

2. それをできるだけ多くの人たちと分かち合いたかったのです。(words)

Music (2:50-)
Talk (3:14-)
3. とても暗くて哀しい響きですよね。(words)

Music (3:24-)
Talk (3:50-)
4. これは、とても元気な感じですね。(words)

Talk (4:21-) --- About children
5. 子供たちは、心から聴きたいと思い、聴くことを心地よいと感じるのです。(* words)

6. 幼い子供は、自分がどう思うのかは気にしません。(* words)

Music (5:45-)

Figure 3. Handout for translation/dictation activity for a TED Talk presentation

scaffolding by giving corrections and suggestions during the pair work.

In the actual *translation* activity, many pairs struggled to translate "*感じ（feel: noun）*" in Q4, and most of them were not able to get over the idea of using "feel" as a noun. After the dictation, they realized that they could have used "sound" as a verb to express the noun "feel." As for Q5, many found it difficult to translate "*心から (from the bottom of the heart)*" and tried to use words like "heart" and "mind," which did not help them complete the task. Then one student asked me, "Is it OK to paraphrase "*心から* (*kokorokara,* meaning from the bottom of the heart)" to "*ほんまに* (*honmani*, meaning really)?" I replied by saying that would be a good idea, and this student successfully translated the sentence into "Children really want to listen and feel comfortable listening."

In the process of this *translation* activity, the learners seemed to pay more attention to the core messages in L1 sentences and realized that the literal translation technique did not work in authentic communication settings. They underwent a variety of meaning-negotiation processes before reaching "their" good-enough *translation*, such as paraphrasing either from L1 to L1 or from L2 to L2, retrieving not only exact but also relevant information from their long-term memory, and choosing linguistic components from several alternatives, by themselves or with the teacher's help or the help of their fellow learners. They also realized there could be multiple ways of *translation* by comparing several examples with other pairs, and through this seemed to enjoy the creative process of *translation*.

4. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

Based on previous studies in a variety of areas, including communication, translation, and L2 teaching/learning, there is convincing evidence to suggest that *translation* has an important role to play in the development of L2 learners' communication skills. It seems to be effective for L2 learners to be aware that they should pay more attention to the core intention of utterances, and to encourage them to use positive communication strategies through a deeper thought process from the linguistic, socio-cultural and communicative viewpoints. Furthermore, since there is no one answer, learners are required and allowed to explore their creativity, flexibility, and imagination, which they are very likely to find enjoyable and motivating. *Translation* also seems to be an important and indispensable skill for L2 learners as valuable assets in an increasingly global multilingual and multicultural society, with consideration given to possible real life situations where they will be able to use both their L1 and L2 effectively.

However, it is not just beneficial for learners, as it would appear there may be numerous advantages for teachers who adopt TILT approaches. Because two languages are involved in *translation*, there seems to be a wider variety of ways to explore SLA, compared to those in the monolingual classroom. Using both languages will likely benefit L2 learners and help them understand the many aspects that are recognized as requisite during communication as bilingual language users. Of course, monolingual classrooms provide their own benefits to L2 users, but teachers who are also L2 users who share the same L1 with learners have the advantage of providing their own effective ways of scaffolding.

Unlike monolingual language users, L2 users can recognize what kind of problems the learner is facing based on their knowledge and experience of both L1 and L2. In particular,

they are able to pick up learners' mistakes due to negative transfer from L1 caused by literal translation. For example, Japanese learners of English often make the phrase "protect rules" by mistake. This mistake is caused by a Japanese verb "*mamoru*," which means "follow" or "obey" (e.g. rules) as well as "protect" (e.g. the environment, children, human rights). If the teacher is a J-E L2 user, he/she will recognize the mistake and can scaffold by paraphrasing "*mamoru*" into "*shitagau*" to help the learner notice the mistake. This type of scaffolding will enhance learners' awareness of the risk of negative transfer, and further encourage them to undergo deeper internal thinking through the comparison of L1 and L2.

Therefore, *translation* is undoubtedly useful, and especially for bilingual teachers whose L1 is the same as that of L2 learners. According to Medgyes (2001, p.436), L2 user/teachers play an important role for learners, as they can:

1. provide a better learner model;
2. teach language-learning strategies more effectively;
3. supply more information about the English language;
4. better anticipate and prevent language difficulties;
5. be more sensitive to their students; and
6. benefit from their ability to use the students' mother tongue.

L2 user/teachers are, after all, L2 users who are still learning, albeit at a more advanced L2 proficiency level than that of their students. They can share their own negative experiences of L2 learning or use with their students, and this could also be inspiring for students as they witness their teachers explore their own bilingual skills, and sometimes overcome a struggle with L2 production, with their own eyes. If learners view their teachers as role models, this would be a motivational opportunity for them to become aware of how to become a bilingual L2 user. It would also prove of great benefit to students as they move toward becoming successful, autonomous learners.

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TILT（言語教育における翻訳）：
外国語教育･学習における効果的なコミュニケーション･ツールとしての翻訳の利用

ラムスデン　多夏子

要　旨

訳は，外国語教育・学習において実際に使用され続けてきたのに関わらず，また，実社会の異言語間コミュニケーションの仲介に欠かせないスキルであるのに関わらず，外国語学習者のコミュニケーション力を伸ばすツールとして過小評価あるいは否定されてきた。これに異議を唱え TILT（言語教育における翻訳）の効用を検証するため，本稿では，まず，コミュニケーションのための翻訳およびコミュニケーション方略の観点から，外国語学習者のコミュニケーション能力向上を促す翻訳の有効性について議論する。そして，TILT 議論の前提としてＬ１使用の意義を考察した上で，TILT に対する賛否の見解と学習者の意識を先行研究をもとに述べる。さらに，日本の大学生を対象に実際に行ったアクティビティ二例を紹介し，先行研究と実践例をもとに，L2 ユーザーとしての教師・学習者に対する TILT の効果が認識されるべきであるとの結論に達した。

キーワード：TILT（言語教育における翻訳），翻訳，コミュニケーション方略，コミュニケーション，L1 使用